



US General Services
Administration

Public Buildings Service
1800 F Street NW
Washington DC 20405

tel: 202.501.1881
fax: 202.208.2996

GSA URBAN CENTER NEWS

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"Public buildings often accurately reflect the beliefs, priorities, and aspirations of a people. For much of our history, the courthouse has served not just as a local center of the law and government but as a meeting ground, cultural hub, and social gathering place."

*-- former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr.
(in the forward to "Virginia's Historic Courthouses", by John O. and
Margaret T. Peters)*

To Our Federal and Community Partners:

This regular ENews is designed to keep you informed about GSA's projects and activities across the country. We invite you to share in our efforts and we encourage your feedback and input.

Thanks for your support.

NATIONAL NEWS

Economic Study Underway in Three Cities

GSA, the National Main Street Center, and local downtown management organizations in Athens, GA; Baltimore, MD; and Springfield, IL are working on a study to determine the impact of the federal presence on communities. The study is looking at the economic impact that federal workers, federal buildings, visitors to federal buildings, and federal agencies have on downtowns. The group is using five different surveys to capture information and will create a model for GSA to use to gauge the economic impact of the federal presence in other downtowns. For more information, contact Frank Giblin on (202) 501-1856.

Release of Urban Policy Update Issue 2

The Center announces the release of Issue 2 of its Urban Policy Update, "Focus on: Downtown Improvement Strategies - BIDs and Other Tools." This policy newsletter, written for GSA's realty professionals but of value to anyone interested in learning about GSA's commitment to partnering with downtown organizations and helping to keep the nation's central business areas lively, features frequently asked questions and lessons learned, and also contains a listing of more than 35 agreements GSA has with downtown management groups across the country. For hard copies of the Update, please contact the Center. For an electronic version, go to <http://goodneighbor.gsa.gov/Goodnb/Policies/> and click on "Urban Policy Update, Issue 2."

CUED Conference

On February 21, Acting Center Director Frank Giblin represented GSA on a business improvement districts (BID) panel at the Council for Urban Economic Development's 2001 Economic Development Summit held in Washington, DC. The panel was moderated by Larry Houston of the Atlantic Group, an expert and author on BID creation and management. The other panelists were Rich Bradley, the Executive Director of DowntownDC, and David Dabney, Executive Director of the Bethesda (MD) Urban Partnership. Frank explained GSA's role as a user of BID services and discussed how GSA, BIDs, and federal agencies share common interests that can be addressed through local partnerships. He noted, too, that many public spaces in and around GSA properties are valuable unused resources that could be activated through these partnerships. For more information including sample agreements,

web: goodneighbor.gsa.gov
email: goodneighbor@gsa.gov



the latest Urban Policy Update, and contract information see the Policies and Practices section on the Center's web site at <http://goodneighbor.gsa.gov> or call Frank Giblin at (202) 501-1856.

APA Conference

The Center's Harold Hebert and Kristi Tunstall participated in the 92nd Conference of the American Planning Association in New Orleans, LA, March 10-14. Many conference participants stopped by the Center's exhibit booth to find out more about the Center and voice their support for our projects and other efforts around the country. The conference featured workshops on all areas of planning and provided an overview of the current state of planning. For more information, contact Harold on (817) 978-4660.

2001 National Town Meeting on Main Street

The Center's Crofton Whitfield and Edward Giefer participated in this year's National Town Meeting on Main Street in Indianapolis, April 1-4. On display was the Center's exhibit booth and outreach materials, and Whitfield and Giefer participated in sessions such as "The ABCs of Creating BIDs", "Downtown Indianapolis Success Story", "Surprising Partnerships", and "Crisis in Parking". For more information, contact Crofton on (312) 353-4846 or Ed on (202) 219-2355.

REGIONAL NEWS

Great Lakes Region Working With Partners, Big and Small

On March 13, the Youngstown (OH) Board of Education announced that it is partnering with GSA's Great Lakes Region to provide student-painted murals at the construction site for the new federal courthouse downtown. Through their art classes, students will paint murals on panels that will become part of the fence surrounding the site. Every school in the district intends to participate. GSA's construction manager, the Dick Corporation, arranged for the donation of 55 four-by-eight foot plywood panels, while the schools will supply the paints and the artists, of course. This program is the first of many partnering opportunities that GSA and local partners in Youngstown have been discussing since last summer. Construction on the courthouse will begin this spring with occupancy planned for late 2002. For more information, contact Crofton Whitfield at (312) 353-4846.

Rocky Mountain Region Extends Community Outreach to Local University

GSA's Rocky Mountain Region's Office of Property Development and Office of Business Development are spearheading a new community outreach program. GSA is participating in the University of Colorado at Denver's graduate architecture design studio. This program involves representatives from the City of Denver, GSA's Center for Development, the Denver Botanic Gardens, and many others. Students study the dynamics of "private vs. public" access to space and how to best implement GSA's Good Neighbor Program in the Downtown Denver Federal District Master Plan (the students will unveil their efforts in May). A symposium for local architecture students is being planned. For more information, contact Janet Preisser on (303) 236-7131 (x248).

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Article - "Federal Spaces, Community Places"

"Federal Spaces Community Places", an article on recent GSA efforts to improve public spaces at some of our buildings and raise awareness of the federal impact on communities, is in the March 2001 edition of Governing magazine. The article discusses ongoing projects in Denver, Washington, and Montpelier, VT, and notes how federal projects in Oakland, St. Louis, and Omaha have served as positive catalysts for development. For hard copies of the article, please contact the Center. For an electronic version, go to <http://governing.com/3gsa.htm>.

Articles on economic impact study

- "Unlocking mysteries of federal agencies' contributions to Baltimore," Maryland Daily Record (2/28/2001), http://www.mddailyrecord.com/archives/1_201_techlink/businessnews/27228-1.html
- "Baltimore, 2 other cities in federal impact study," Baltimore Sun (2/28/2001)
- "Springfield to represent midsized cities in GSA study," Springfield (IL) Journal-Record (2/27/2001)
- "Federal study examining shopping, work habits," Springfield (IL) Journal-Record (2/28/2001)
- "National Trust and GSA Select Three Pilot Cities for Downtown Economic Measurement Project," National Trust for Historic Preservation (press release) (2/27/2001), http://www.nationaltrust.org/main/frontline/releases/2001/February/pr_gsa.htm



- "GSA programs make downtown federal districts more visitor-friendly." This article, on good things happening in Denver, can be found in the Downtown Research & Development Center's February 15, 2001, Idea Exchange newsletter.

SPECIAL NOTES

New Organization

The Center for Urban Development has moved into the Center for Development in GSA's Office of the Chief Architect. The new Center will work to ensure that excellence in planning, urban development, and landscape and building architecture will be integrated into all of GSA's real estate projects.

[Please email questions, comments or contributions to the ENews to Edward Giefer at edward.giefer@gsa.gov or call (202) 219-2355.]